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PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and intercountry programmes and projects

FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR COLOMBIA

Note by the Administrator

I. PROCESS OF THE PROGRAMMING EXERCISE

1. The process of the programming exercise was formally initiated in October 1990 with the determination of the priority areas for technical cooperation and arrangements for the assessment of the fourth country programme for Colombia. This process included the joint selection of thematic areas for the fifth country programme based on the analysis of the Government's National Development Plan and the UNDP programme guidelines contained in decision 90/34 of the Governing Council. The Office of the Resident Representative, with the support of a group of national experts, prepared basic documents for each one of the proposed areas, recommending specific actions and the strategy to optimize the cooperation of UNDP in the respective national programmes in coordination with the specialized agencies of the United Nations system. At the same time, a general assessment was carried out of the fourth country programme, which was concluded in January 1991. The assessment underscored the most important achievements of the technical cooperation activities that had been carried out, made a number of recommendations and drew attention to the functional strategy of UND? cooperation in the country during the fourth programming cycle.

2. The UNDP note addressed to the Government in mid-1991, together with the above-mentioned documents and the general assessment of the fourth country programme, was rigorously analysed in working meetings with the National

Planning Department, specialized government agencies, and representatives of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other cooperating agencies with offices in Colombia. Through these meetings, it was possible to define the structure of the new programme and the characteristics of its implementation, as well as to agree on the mechanisms for following up the recommendations of the assessment of the fourth country programme. The definitive elaboration of the fifth country programme, which was undertaken by the Government with the support of the Office of the Resident Representative, takes into account the recommendations contained in the UNDP note, and was fully coordinated with the representatives of the specialized agencies of the United Nations.

3. The Government has taken the opportunity provided by the process of preparation of the fifth country programme to examine in detail its own policies and priorities for technical cooperation from all sources. The Administrator notes with satisfaction that as a result of this process, the Government has decided to prepare a plan of international cooperation for which it has received the support of the National Technical Cooperation Assessment and Programmes methodology (NaTCAP), and has also decided to adopt the guidelines of the fifth country programme as a reference framework for its cooperation with the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and for the mobilization of bilateral technical cooperation resources.

II. THE FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR COLOMBIA

4. The fifth country programme for Colombia, which covers the period 1992-1996, is designed principally to strengthen the capacity of the Government to implement all of its ongoing priority programmes, which represent an exceptionally profound and major change in the State, in social policy and in the economy.

5. The cooperation strategy of UNDP is essentially to strengthen specific areas of the Government's capacity, paying particular attention to four main functions: to support the design of national programmes and mechanisms for institutional action; to facilitate the implementation of innovative actions which could generate sectoral and regional models that can be copied; to participate in the promotion and mobilization of resources for cooperation; and to strengthen the procedures for the follow-up and assessment of the efficiency and impact of national programmes.

6. The fifth country programme identifies four thematic areas in which UNDP has comparative advantages in providing direct cooperation and in attracting support from the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other cooperating agencies, thereby highlighting the character of the programme as a general framework and as an instrument for coordinating and mobilizing cooperation. These thematic areas coincide with the priorities of the National Development Plan, the global objectives of the United Nations system and the strategy of human development.

7. The thematic area of social development and the elimination of poverty receives particular emphasis, with 47.35 per cent of indicative planning figure (IPF) resources, which is consistent with the intention of the Government to redirect public expenditure to the social sectors and to provide universal basic health care, with emphasis on poor and vulnerable groups. The main objectives in this thematic area are: to support the effort to create mechanisms for the channelling of social expenditure towards the poorer groups; to enhance the efficiency and promote the modernization of social management; to design strategies for the channelling of social subsidies; and to promote the participation of non-governmental organizations and of the community in these actions.

8. The thematic area of economic liberalization and productive development is connected to the demands of the government strategy of economic growth, which includes changes designed to bring about institutional, technological, infrastructural and entrepreneurial modernization. UNDP is expected to continue its support for institutional restructuring, which has been facilitating the transformation of existing structures and the establishment of the agencies required by government policy. In the other fields, the link with UNDP is to be considered, at the same time, as direct support and promotion of cooperation, with the expectation that UNDP will participate in providing preparatory assistance and guidelines and in promoting the necessary programmes to enable the Government and the private sector to have access to specialized cooperating agencies. Particular emphasis will be placed on the promotion of cooperation for the process of privatization of firms and services, on the basis of efficiency. This area receives 20.58 per cent of IPF resources, and it is hoped that substantial resources for cooperation will be mobilized.

9. The thematic area of territorial development and modernization of the State is directly related to the significant process of change which has recently been consolidated in the 1991 Constitution, and to the ambitious programme of full-scale decentralization which is being implemented in Colombia. UNDP in its cooperation programmes will maintain its commitment to provide technical support to decentralization, both in reorganizing the central structures and in developing local management models. Significant resources will be channelled from the World Bank for the institutional development of municipalities, and support will continue to be provided to the National Rehabilitation Plan, which has been decisive in securing peace and democracy in the marginal regions of the country. This area includes support from UNDP for the creation of a culture of human rights, which constitutes an innovative form of public management and cooperation by UNDP and is being adopted in other countries of the region. About 22.23 per cent of IPF resources have been programmed for this area.

10. The thematic area of sustained environmental development reflects the priority accorded to it under the new National Development Plan. UNDP has undertaken to transfer know-how and experience for the establishment of the necessary institutional structure. It is currently participating in the planning of a new Ministry of the Environment and in promoting pilot

experiments in municipal and community management of the environment. An essential component of programme activity in this area is the promotion and channelling of specialized international cooperation for the development of research and experimentation, the management of ecosystems, pollution control, and the optimal use of energy sources. Agreement has been reached with the Government to allocate some 9.84 per cent of IPF resources to this area, to carry out the activities envisaged.

11. Resources for the fifth country programme amount to $11.7 million from the IPF, less $1,984,000 loaned to the fourth programme, and $62.2 million in cost-sharing. It is estimated that additional resources can be mobilized from other sources amounting to some $59.1 million. The IPF resources are in the nature of seed money in UNDP's strategy of cooperation for the fifth programme.

III. MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

12. National execution is an essential component of UNDP's strategy of cooperation for the fifth country programme. This form of execution is to be consolidated during the fifth cycle, so that government bodies, while continuing to perform the managerial and technical functions of cooperation, will gradually take on the administrative and logistical responsibilities inherent in national execution.

13. National execution will be strengthened by the programme structure which is being designed by the Government to receive international cooperation. Each area of concentration is structured around programmes which incorporate support and technical backstopping provided by UNDP, funds administered by UNDP, specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other sources of cooperation, to promote national development objectives which are essentially being pursued with national resources. The Director-General of each programme has the rank of Minister and has a board of directors consisting of representatives of the national bodies involved in execution, a manager and a committee of cooperating agencies.

14. The Administrator notes with particular satisfaction that coordination of cooperation is thus being achieved on the basis of specific national programmes, and that the implementation of a "programme focus", which will be at the basis of execution in most cases of UNDP cooperation, is being facilitated. In some cases, cooperation extends to a group of projects, conforming to existing institutional frameworks. Currently progress is being made in structuring the areas of concentration, including their respective mechanisms for evaluation of processes and impact assessment in the light of the goals of the national programmes.

15. The genera_ functions of coordination, follow-up and evaluation of the fifth country programme for Colombia will be the joint responsibility of the Office of the Resident Representative of UNDP and the National Planning Department, in its capacity as the national body responsible for the

coordination of international cooperation, as well as the formulation and evaluation of national plans and programmes, and the preparation of the national public investment budget. An in-depth mid-term study is to be made in 1994, in addition to any thematic evaluations carried out in the course of the execution of the fifth programme.

IV. RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

16. The design of the fifth country programme for Colombia is the result of consensus and coordination between the Government, the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and UNDP. It stresses the functional strategy of UNDP cooperation in the country, which has had a significant impact in the fourth programme, despite limited resources, because of its concentration on innovation and on the mobilization of funds on the basis of the major priorities of national development. By its nature, the fifth country programme will be subject to national execution and will include innovative mechanisms based on the "programme focus" and evaluation of its impact.

17. In the light of the foregoing, the Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for Colombia.